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HISTORICAL AND PRACTICAL

ENQUIRIES

ON THE SECTION OF THE SYMPHYSIS OF THE PUBES,

AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE

CÆSARIAN OPERATION,

PERFORMED AT PARIS,

By M. SIGAULT, OCTOBER 2d, 1777.

By M. ALPHNONSE LE ROY,
Doctor Regent of the Faculty of Phyſic in PARIS, and Profeſſor of Midwifery, &c.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

BY LEWIS POIGNAND,

Of the Corporation of Surgeons, London, and Surgeon to the Weſtminſter Lying-in Hoſpital.

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NICVM

TO

DR. JOHN LEAKE,

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF

PHYSICIANS, LONDON,

PHYSICIAN TO THE WESTMINSTER

LYING-IN HOSPITAL,

AND PROFESSOR OF MIDWIFERY;

AS A SLENDER TRIBUTE DUE TO HIS

EXTENSIVE MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE

AND DISTINGUISHED MERIT,

IN WHAT RELATES

TO THE OBSTETRIC SCIENCE

AND DISEASES INCIDENT TO WOMEN,

THIS TRANSLATION

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY HIS HUMBLE

AND MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,

LEWIS POIGNAND.

Duke-Street, Weſtminſter,
October 1, 1778.

TO

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LEWIS POIGNAND.

Dublin, 1778.

ADVERTISEMENT.

I was encouraged to undertake the following Tranſlation, by that Gentleman to whom I have done myſelf the Honor to inſcribe it; he obligingly ſent the Original *for my Peruſal, with a Letter from the Author, which I have taken the Liberty alſo to tranſlate. I perceived he was diſpoſed to think favourably of the* New Operation *of cutting the* Symphyſis *of the* Pubes, *ſo zealouſly recommended by my Countryman* Mr. Le Roy, *and therefore imagined it would be rendering acceptable Service to the Public, thus to make it more univerſally known to the* Medical World, *as well as to reconcile it to the general Opinion of Mankind, who are uſually averſe to Innovations in Practice, however beneficial to the Community.*

I have endeavoured to give a literal tranſlation, as far as the Idiom of the Engliſh Language would permit; and where I was obliged

to depart from it, I have taken as much Pains as possible to preserve the genuine Sense and Meaning of the Original.

Several Repetitions and Digressions, which did not tend to illustrate the Nature of the operation, or confirm the Success of it, I have taken the Liberty to omit, for which my Apology is due to the Author. If in this Translation many Errors or Inaccuracies of Stile are to be found; I beg the Reader will permit me, as a Foreigner, to claim his Indulgence on that Account.

MONSIEUR,

MONSIEUR,

JE vous prie d'accepter un exemplaire de L'ouvrage que je publie en faveur de L'operation nouvelle de la ſection de la Simphiſe que j'ai determiné, et á la quelle j'ai coopèré. J'y joins le recit de la Faculté de Medecine de Paris, *et une Thèſe qui vient dètre ſoutenue dans nos Ecolles, la quelle adopte mes principes et offre ſix examples de ſuccès. J'enſeigne les accouchemens, &c. Je ſuis le premier Medecin de notre facultè qui ſe ſoit auſſi décidément livré á cette partie de la Medecine qui eſt en France aux mains des Chirurgiens. Je connois vos travaux ſur les fiévres á la ſuite des couches; j'etablis vos principes et je me plais a vanter vos talens. J'ai donné une Hiſtoire des principaux Accoucheurs, Smellie & vous, Monſieur, y occupé un rang diſtingué. Recevez mon Opuſcule comme un homage que je me plais a rendre á votre célébrité. J'ai mandé á mon Libraire de me faire parvenir tous vos ouvrages, je compte en faire bon uſage*

pour

pour un traitè D'Accouchemens, que je vais publier et dans le quel j'aurai un grand nombre de fois occaſion de publier avec quels ſentimens d'eſtime reſpectueuſe j'ai L'honneur d'etre,

Monſieur,

Votre trés humble et trés obeiſſant Serviteur,

ALPHONSE LE ROY,

Doctor Regent de la Faculté de Medecine

Mai le 15, de Paris, Profeſſeur D'Accouchemens

1778. *et de Maladies des Femmes.*

M. Leake, Profeſſeur D'Accouchemens.

TRANSLATION.

TRANSLATION.

SIR,

I INTREAT your acceptance of my Publication on the *new operation* of cutting the ſymphyſis of the *pubes*, which I have ſucceſsfully performed. I likewiſe encloſe a report of the Medical Faculty at *Paris*, and a Theſis, which has lately been diſcuſſed in our College, wherein my principles are adopted; together with *ſix examples* of the ſucceſs of this operation. I give lectures in midwifery, &c. and am the firſt in our faculty who has ſo devoted himſelf to this branch of phyſic, which in France belongs to ſurgery. I am acquainted with your *Practical Obſervations, &c. on the Child-bed Fever*. I adopt your principles, and take pleaſure in praiſing your Talents. I have given a Hiſtory of the principal *Accoucheurs*, wherein *Smellie* and you, Sir, hold a diſtinguiſhed rank. I preſent you with a ſketch of my work, as a tribute which I owe to your eminent Reputation, and have given orders to my bookſeller,

bookſeller, to ſend me all your works, of which I intend to make a proper uſe towards a Treatiſe I am going to publiſh on Midwifery, wherein I ſhall have frequent occaſion to teſtify the reſpectful eſteem with which,

SIR,

I have the Honour to be,

Your moſt humble,

And moſt obedient Servant,

ALPHONSE LE ROY, M. D. &c.

May 15. 1778.

M. LEAKE, Profeſſor of Midwifery, &c.

PREFACE.

PREFACE.

WERE it allowable to eſtimate the advantage of a diſcovery by its public utility, it muſt be acknowledged the new ſection of the *os pubis*, introduced as a ſubſtitute for the *Cæſarian* operation, is one of the moſt important that has been made in this age. This operation was no ſooner performed at *Paris*, upon Mrs. *Souchot*, than the fame of it was ſpread every where, and engaged general attention at home and abroad: people differed in opinion concerning it; ſome, who pretended to be judges of this diſcovery, were eager to decry it, and to give the name of raſhneſs to the ſpirited enterprize of two phyſicians, who joined the practice of ſurgery to that of phyſic. They denied the poſſibility of

gaining

gaining a ſufficient ſeparation of the *os pubis* by this operation; and in order to demonſtrate what they advanced, their utmoſt power to that end was exerted in a public theatre, before a number of Students, but their efforts proved unſucceſsful. They repreſented theſe two phyſicians in combination, to attribute to each other an imaginary ſucceſs in their profeſſion, and that they were bold enough when ſtimulated by intereſt to impoſe on the preſent age; but theſe incredulous opponents were thunder-ſtruck at the teſtimony of applauſe which many of the faculty, as well as ſeveral curious perſons, gave to their proceeding. Envy has a thouſand reſources; an alarm was ſpread of the precarious ſtate of the patient; palpable falſehoods were printed on the occaſion, and every day papers were publiſhed in order to defame their reputation: in the mean time the cure advanced, and the patient at length recovered ſo as to reſume her uſual occupation.

occupation. She herſelf then atteſted her recovery, by appearing in the ſchools of the faculty, and other places. Upon a recital of the manner in which the operation was performed, and the ſucceſs attending it, which were confirmed by the phyſicians appointed by the faculty; that reſpectable body, full of zeal in the execution of laudable deeds, decreed certain honours to the two members of their ſociety, who had invented that operation. This act of approbation ſtimulated envy afreſh. A pamphlet appeared under the title of *Reflections on the Section of the Pubes.* This title is merely a veil which conceals the utmoſt malignity.---It would be loſing time to attempt the refutation of a ſcribbler, who had been previouſly called to Mrs. *Souchot*'s aſſiſtance, and by whom the life of her firſt child, and alſo of three more could not be ſaved. Behaviour of this kind has been common in every age.

In

In the year 1775, when I publiſhed the firſt part of my courſe of midwifery, I had the misfortune to diſpleaſe certain perſons whoſe falſe principles I had expoſed. The caſe of Mrs. *Souchot*, in which I was concerned, furniſhed them with a new opportunity to attack me and my practice, but their calumny had no effect, though they attempted to rob me of the honourable part I had in the diſcovery.

Some of the antients had a faint notion of the utility of the ſection of the *pubes*; but their works afford nothing but conjecture on the ſubject. Mankind will ever be indebted to Mr. *Sigault*, in being the firſt who entertained ſuch ſtrong and clear ideas of this operation, and for propoſing the performance of it. We often reflect on the obſtacles, without ſeeking to remove them, when a little exertion would be ſufficient to compleat our wiſhes: with this view, I undertook a variety of expe-

riments,

riments, and have been ſo happy as to ſucceed by them, in obtaining all the ſeparation that could be wiſhed for and expected. I think I have, by theſe means, proved the utility of the operation.

Mr. *Sigault*, to whom I communicated my ſucceſs, meeting with a favourable caſe, acquainted me of it. I encouraged him to the operation, which we performed to our wiſhes. The *Pariſian Journal*, in its account of this event, ſays, in a curſory way, "That I accompanied my colleague;" but to do juſtice to Mr. *Sigault*, I muſt here acknowledge, that he contradicted the journaliſt, though he was his friend, and declared that the whole care of the patient was mine, on account of a fit of illneſs by which he was confined.

Commiſſioners who had been appointed by the faculty to inſpect the caſe, made a juſt report of it. Mr. *Sigault* and I gave

an

an account of each others proceedings; in conſequence of which they conferred on us the honour of a medal, with our names engraved upon it.

I have ſufficiently, and perhaps too long dwelt upon perſonal wrongs.---- Though I may not have gained my due reward of fame and reputation, I ſhall certainly have the ſatisfaction to think I have made diſcoveries uſeful and highly intereſting to mankind: the pleaſure of doing good would be too delightful, were we not now and then interrupted in the purſuit of it.

HISTORICAL

PRACTICAL AND HISTORICAL

ENQUIRIES

ON THE SECTION OF THE SYMPHYSIS OF THE PUBES.

BY delivery is underſtood the deſcent of the child through the *pelvis*. The theory of this operation comprehends a knowledge of the poſitions, dimenſions, proportions and relation which the child bears to the *pelvis*. When their reſpective dimenſions are in juſt proportion, and the poſition is good, nature is all ſufficient; but otherwiſe, we muſt have recourſe to art. It is ſurpriſing that this fundamental principle ſhould have eſcaped the ancients, and that even to this day moſt of the moderns ſhould be unacquainted with it.

What has been the conſequence of the ignorance of practitioners with reſpect to this operation? By miſtaking the real obſtacle, and being unacquainted with this art which aſſiſts nature, Accoucheurs have had recourſe to means deſtructive to the mother or child, and ſometimes to both, in circumſtances which admitted of their preſervation. Hence, no doubt, the prepoſſeſſion in women which renders this otherwiſe deſirable moment ſo formidable.

The chief object of the ancients, at the time of delivery, was the preſervation of the mother's life, and they always preferred it to that of the child, as the latter could preſent to the public nothing but uncertain hopes of utility; but notwithſtanding this, mothers often became the victims of injurious practice. The laws ordained that an operation, known ſince by the name of *Cæſarian*, ſhould be performed on every woman dying in labour, in order at leaſt to ſave

ſave the child. Modern practitioners have ventured to perform this operation on the living body likewiſe, with a view of ſaving the mother as well as child; but for one ſucceſsful attempt, how many unſucceſsful ones have been paſſed over unnoticed!

Shall we then pretend to have perfected an art, which, while it contributes only in ſome meaſure to the ſafety of the child, renders that of the mother more precarious?

Have not the moderns ſometimes unſeaſonably performed the *Cæſarian* operation, by confounding a wrong poſition of the child with the want of due proportion in the parts? We have ſome inſtances of women recovering of this dangerous operation, who in a ſubſequent lying-in, were delivered without its dreadful aſſiſtance.

From ſuch errors, and many others equally deſtructive, I deemed it of importance to eſtabliſh in this art ſome clear and ſtriking principles, founded upon the

 dimenſions

dimenſions of the body to paſs, and of the parts which afford it paſſage.

When the *pelvis* is too narrow for the child's head, a circumſtance which induced the ancients to deſtroy it, and which, according to modern practice, expoſes the mother to the hazard of the *Cæſarian* operation, in order to preſerve it, the inciſion of the *pubes* has been recommended. I have demonſtrated the advantages reſulting from it, and ſucceſs has already ſeconded my expectations. I now diſcharge a duty which humanity dictates, in publiſhing this new operation, and my reflections from thence ariſing. I ſhall diſcuſs the objections which may reaſonably be made to it, and ſhall conſider this important ſubject in three points of view, viz. *Hiſtory*, *Practice*, and *Theory*.

Firſt, I ſhall conſider how the mind of man, ſo ſlow in its advances, at length arrived at a diſcovery of this operation.

Secondly, The manner in which it was performed on Mrs. *Sonchot*, together with the

the whole proceſs during and ſubſequent to the operation.

Thirdly, I ſhall endeavour to throw ſome light upon the cauſes of the accidents which happened in her caſe, and the means of preventing ſuch in future; I ſhall afterwards point out the circumſtances under which this operation may prove uſeful, and the principles upon which we may act in ſimilar caſes.

PART

PART I.

WE are often extremely ſurpriſed at the ſize of a new-born infant; 'tis hard to conceive how it has made its way into the world. Thoſe who firſt made midwifry the object of their attention, endeavouring to account for this phænomenon, began by conſidering the ſtructure of the *pelvis*; they obſerved, that the different parts of which it is compoſed are connected by a ſubſtance which never becomes oſſified in young women, and which, during the latter period of their pregnancy, ſwells and ſoftens. From theſe circumſtances they ſaw the beneficent intention of nature, which by this means admits, to a certain degree, a ſeparation which enlarges the dimenſions of the *pelvis*.

Hippocrates was of opinion, that the pains in the loins which women feel during labour, originated

originated from the posterior articulation of the *pelvis*; that they proceeded from the efforts which nature directed towards the parts. These are his words:

"Women, in their first labour, feel very sharp * pains in their loins, and in the lower part of the *os ilium*; at that time these bones divide and separate one from the other."

Hippocrates in the above passage attends only to the separation of the posterior articulation; but in another place † he seems to attend solely to the anterior. "When the time of gestation is completed, says he, the bones separate to the right and left." These passages have given rise to three different opinions relative to the separation of the parts of the *pelvis*, and the efforts of the *uterus* in expelling the child. Some would have it that these efforts were directed towards the posterior parts only, and separated the posterior articulation only;

 others,

* Hipp. de Natura Pueri.

† Idem de Epidem.

others, guided by obſervation, maintained, that they extended towards the fore part of the *pelvis*, and that it was particularly towards the *pubes* that nature had fixed the mobility and ſeparation of the parts: And laſtly, others were of opinion they were directed equally towards the whole opening, and tended to increaſe it in every direction.

The *Arabians* adopted this laſt hypotheſis. "When the *fœtus*, ſays *Avicenna*, is on the point of excluſion from the mother, the *uterus* opens, the joints are ſeparated, and this operation is one of the greateſt efforts of nature."

It ſeems that even the ancients had ſome thoughts of ſeparating the *pubes*, in order to facilitate delivery, and that this notion had given riſe to ſome fabulous accounts, which gained great credit amongſt the vulgar. "Can any ſenſible man believe, ſays the celebrated *Veſalius*, that there are, as people pretend, nations who, upon the birth of a daughter,

daughter, ſeparate the *pubes*, in order to facilitate her labours?"

The *Greeks* looked upon the ſymphyſes of the *pelvis* as ſo many joints. *Veſalius* oppoſed this opinion. He looked upon the ſubſtance of the ſymphyſes to be like the other cartilages. So that if the opinion of the ſoftening and ſeparation of the parts was carried too far, he would eſtabliſh one error, while he meant to explode another.

The authority of this great man made many of the ſame opinion. In the year 1319, one of our predeceſſors in the faculty of medicine at Paris, *Jacque D'Amboiſe*, equally famous for his talents and attachment to Henry the IVth. during the league, gave lectures on anatomy, as was cuſtomary, at *St. Come*. In the courſe of theſe lectures, he happened to meet with the body of a woman, who a few days after delivery was executed for ſtifling her child. Mr. *D'Amboiſe*, thinking this a favourable opportunity to decide the queſtion of the

ſoftening

ſoftening and ſeparation of the bones of the *pelvis*, gave notice, that in a public lecture this ſubject would be conſidered; and he invited the moſt celebrated phyſicians and ſurgeons to attend. He demonſtrated to the aſſembly, that the bones of the *pelvis*, eſpecially towards the ſymphyſes of the *pubes*, ſeparated a few lines,* and he proved that it did not proceed from any unſound ſtate of the parts, becauſe the woman had been in good health during her pregnancy. He ſhewed, that upon raiſing one thigh, the correſponding *pubes* roſe above the other; nevertheleſs, in ſpite of authority, reaſon, and the teſtimony of the ſenſes, many perſons remained obſtinate in a contrary opinion. Mr. *Pineau*, a very ſkilful ſurgeon and anatomiſt, was particularly ſtruck at this circumſtance, and hurt at the obſtinacy of ſome of the company. He collected

* The French meaſure is nearly as follows:—Twelve lines make one inch, and twelve inches one foot; but their foot contains near thirteen Engliſh inches.

collected the whole of what had been ſaid on this ſubject, and formed it into a ſmall Treatiſe, which contains a variety of excellent obſervations, of which I ſhall give an extract.

This writer, with *Galen*, looks upon the ſymphyſes of the *pelvis* as ſo many articulations; that of the *pubes* ſeems to him more diſpoſed than the reſt to ſwell and ſoften during pregnancy. "The ſubſtance of the ſymphyſes, ſays he, is like a ſponge, it becomes moiſt during pregnancy, and grows dry after delivery by degrees. The cauſe of this ſoftneſs depends upon a mucous diſcharge upon theſe parts. Unſucceſsful attempts have been made to dilate the *pubes* with a wedge; but this ſeparation cannot be effected except near the time of delivery. When the finger is applied to the *pubes* of a pregnant woman, this part gives ſigns of extreme ſenſibility, which ariſes from the ſwelling in theſe joints diſtending the *periofteum*, and ſeparating it. Might not art increaſe

creaſe this ſoftneſs of the parts which nature attempts? In order to promote this, may we not, during pregnancy, apply to the ſymphyſes, eſpecially to that of the *pubes*, emolient cataplaſms, oily embrocations, and ſemicupia, &c?"

Mr. *Pineau* perceiving that theſe means would be rejected, without even giving them a fair trial, therefore dedicated his work to the celebrated *Dr. Riverius*, perſuaded that his name would have great influence. After an attentive obſervation, as we have ſeen, of the means by which nature brings about the ſwelling and ſoftening, he tried every method which medicine or ſurgery could furniſh, in order to effect it. "If we hold, ſays he, the thighs of a woman in labour, raiſed up and extended, the child at every pain advances the more, which depends upon the ſeparation of the *pubes*."

In ſhort, *Pineau* goes ſtill further. He ſays, that we may not only dilate the ſymphyſes by the means which he propoſes, but that

that we may even ſeparate it by *inciſion*. He ſhudders, however, at this propoſal, and begins by reſting on the authority of *Galen*, who ſays, "The containing parts being leſs noble than the contained, may not only be dilated, but cut, for the preſervation of the latter." "Now every ſenſible man, ſays *Pineau*, muſt allow the child in *utero*, to be more noble than the bones which compoſe the *pelvis*."

The authority of *Galen* upon this occaſion, was not well calculated to give credit to this idea. The great experience of *J. D'Amboiſe*, ſerved to perpetuate in the ſchools of the faculty, the doctrine of the ſoftening and the ſeparation of the ſymphyſes of the *pelvis*. *Silvius*, *Riverius*, *Riolanus*, and many others publicly patronized it.

Mr. *Duverney*, in his public lectures delivered at the *Royal Gardens*, ſhewed a *pelvis*, the *pubes* of which had been ſeparated during labour, by the ſole efforts of nature. *Morgagni*, whoſe authority is of much weight

weight in theſe caſes, likewiſe adopted this opinion.

Finally, in the year 1768, Mr. *Sigault* preſented a memorial to the ſurgeons of *Paris*, in which he propoſed the ſection of the ſymphyſes of the *pubes*, in caſes where the *Cæſarian* operation is employed, on account of the diſproportion of the *pelvis* to the child's head. The reaſon which he gave as concluſive was, that by this ſection, the ſpace of an inch was gained, which he had proved to be the caſe in ſeveral women who died in child-bed. It was objected in the firſt place, that in caſes where the *Cæſarian* operation became neceſſary, an inch more room would not be ſufficient. Secondly, it was alledged, that many circumſtances rendered the reunion of the parts very precarious.

While the French ſurgeons were diſputing this matter, Mr. *Camper*, a Dutch phyſician, had recourſe to experiment. He performed this operation on a *ſow*, after ſhe had

had littered; she continued to suckle her pigs, to eat, drink, and walk, and though she threw off the bandage which had been applied in order to favour a union of the parts, they were healed in 15 days.

This experiment being made known throughout Europe, decided one of the chief points in question, viz. the reunion of the parts, but it said nothing respecting the separation, and gave no answer to the objection made to its insufficiency.

Such was the state of the question, when in the year 1773, I had an opportunity of making many observations on the bodies of women who died in child-bed. I endeavoured, by anatomical principles, to bring to greater perfection the art of midwifry, and to obviate the dangerous consequences of delivery. I attended particularly to the operation proposed by Mr. *Sigault*, and endeavoured to reap every possible advantage from the hints he had given. I performed the section of the *pubes* upon dead

subjects,

ſubjects, both male and female. In the firſt I obſerved a ſeparation of between two and three lines ſpace, and in the latter from three to four; in thoſe who died in child-bed, I conſtantly gained from ſix to nine lines. I then reaſoned thus: Why is there a ſeparation in every ſubject? and why is this ſeparation greateſt at the time of delivery? An attentive examination of the parts which conſtitute the *pelvis*, reſolved the firſt queſtion. The two bones which form the hips are united anteriorly by means of a ſubſtance which has paſſed for cartilage; they are joined behind to the lateral ſides of the *ſacrum*, and are equally united to it by means of that ſame ſubſtance, which is faſtened ſtill more firmly by ligaments internally and externally. The name of ſymphyſes was given to theſe three junctions of the pieces of the *pelvis*. The ligaments of the poſterior external part are numerous and much ſtronger than thoſe of the poſterior internal part; ſo that by cutting thoſe

which

which unite the *pubes* in the fore part, the poſterior external ones becoming too powerful for the poſterior internal, a ſeparation of the divided parts muſt neceſſarily enſue.

It ſtill remained to find out why the ſeparation was always greater in women advanced in pregnancy, or delivered. I conſidered the ſtate of the ſymphyſes in women after delivery, and always found the ſubſtance which ſerves as a medium of union, and which has uſually the ſolidity of a cartilage, ſwelled and ſoftened to ſuch a degree, that a lancet was ſufficient to cut it. I obſerved that the ſoftneſs was always in proportion to the ſwelling; whence it followed, that upon cutting the *pubes* of women who died in child-bed, there appeared a greater ſeparation, which ſeemed in proportion to the degree of ſwelling and ſoftneſs in the cartilaginous ſubſtance.

Here

Here I had an opportunity of applying the obſervations already made on that change in the animal œconomy which pregnancy brings on. I obſerved that the cellular membrane was unuſually relaxed in all women after delivery, and filled with a gelatinous matter; all the muſcles were more tender than at other times, and ſo much ſo near the *pelvis*, that I could break them down between my fingers. I compared with this obſervation, thoſe which prove that the fleſh of impregnated females is conſtantly tender. I had remarked that in the country it was a cuſtom to have old cows bulled in order to make them tender and more fit for food; which proved to me, that pregnancy renders the fleſh ſoft and tender; and I was of opinion, that nature went ſtill further, and extended her influence even to the bones.

Obſervation ſhews, that in fractures in women

women with child, the callus does not form ſo as to unite the parts, until ſome time after delivery. Many experiments of this nature made on impregnated bitches exhibited the ſame phænomena. All theſe facts, joined to many other no leſs curious, convinced me that during pregnancy there is brought about, particularly towards the *pelvis*, *a ſolution of the earthly matter in the mother, which is converted to the uſe of the fœtus.*

I adopted this notion ever ſince the year 1770, and then communicated it to our learned and illuſtrious colleague, the late Mr. *Herriſſant*, who had expatiated largely on the earthly animal matter. He approved of my opinion, as well as the manner in which it had been derived from obſervation. He appeared to me quite ſatisfied with the explanation which I gave him of the extraordinary ſoftneſs of the bones of Mrs. *Soupiot*, a phænomenon which in his opinion had not been accounted for in any ſa-

tisfactory manner. I am able, in conſequence of my application ſince that time, to explain the means by which this ſolution of the earthly animal matter is effected.

After having compared all theſe facts which prove that the fleſh, and even the bones, become ſoft, by a kind of ſolution during pregnancy, eſpecially about the *pelvis*, I thought that the ſymphyſes ought naturally to be ſubject to the ſame change. I then perceived there was ſome propriety in the obſervations, which ſeemed heretofore not ſufficiently eſtabliſhed.

I imagined that the ſoftneſs, and conſequently the ſeparation, ought to be in proportion to the greater or leſſer degree of ſolution in the conſolidating principle; this appeared evident from a view of the *pelvis* of a woman after delivery, in which the ſoftneſs was ſuch, that the *pubes* could be ſeparated ſix lines. One would have imagined that the intermediate carti-

lage

lage was almoſt diſſolved, inſomuch, that this ſwelling of the ſymphyſes, which was thought to depend upon an afflux of humours on theſe parts, appeared to me to be the effect of a ſolution of the earthly matter.

I endeavoured to make theſe ideas uſeful to the practice of midwifry. It appeared to me that the coccyx, which is united to the *ſacrum* by the ſame cartilaginous ſubſtance which is found in other ſymphyſes, could, on account of their ſoftneſs, recede during labour, as obſerved by *Deventer*, and that he recommended, in ſome circumſtances, the retro-preſſure of the coccyx to favour delivery. I imagined, that on account of the ſoftneſs already proved, the *ſacrum* itſelf might ſometimes give way to a certain degree; a circumſtance of the utmoſt conſequence in the art of midwifry. Experience anſwered my expectations, and by the ſame ſimple means I have aſſiſted women, who otherwiſe could not have been

delivered without the help of inſtruments.

With regard to Mr. *Sigault*'s project, I ſuſpected that a greater degree of ſeparation could be procured than he had mentioned or obtained. I had remarked, with *Pineau*, that during ſome labours, in raiſing the thighs, and keeping them at a diſtance from each other, the child advanced better during each pain, particularly when the pains were of the forcing kind. I was then of opinion that the *triceps* and *gracilis* muſcles could on each ſide ſeparate the *pubes*, and produce a more conſiderable ſeparation than was obtained by Mr. *Sigault*; and as after death the articulation becomes rigid, I thought it neceſſary to try ſome experiments on a ſubject ſtill warm, although it was hard to be met with. In December 1774, I was called to Mrs. *Braſſeur*, who was expiring in conſequence of the injurious treatment of a woman who endeavoured to deliver her. She was dead when I arrived.

I begged leave of her friends to perform an operation on the body, which was intereſting to mankind. Being permitted, I came ſoon after with one of my pupils, and placed the body upon a table, with ſome cloths under her loins, that the *pelvis* might project. The thighs being raiſed and held at the greateſt diſtance from one another, I began the ſection of the integuments at the ſuperior part of the ſymphyſes, a little to the right; the cartilage being very ſoft, I cut it with a ſlender knife; the inciſion was ſcarce performed, when the *pubes* parted ſo as to admit my four knuckles, an extent equal to two French inches and a half: When her legs were let down and extended, and her thighs near each other, the divided parts approached ſo cloſe as to leave but an extent of ſix or ſeven lines, which were reduced to three or four when ſhe was placed on her ſide. I endeavoured to find out whether any part of the bladder was injured, and

found it was not, and that the ligament which unites it to the *pubes*, was partly preſerved on the left ſide.

This experiment confuted the objections of thoſe who ſuppoſed there would be a want of ſufficient ſeparation, for it was evident to me, that a head of large ſize might be conveyed through a *pelvis*, whoſe aperture, from the anterior to the poſterior part, only meaſured two or three inches.

It was always a maxim with me to be communicative in things relative to ſcience, convinced that though a man may loſe the honour of ſome diſcoveries, yet by enjoying the converſation of others, he will improve his own underſtanding.

I mentioned my diſcovery to ſeveral learned men, and introduced it in both my public and private lectures. I now turned my attention to the poſſibility of reuniting the parts divided in the operation.

The

The experiment of Mr. *Camper* made it a matter leſs doubtful, as we had already inſtances of the cartilages of the larynx uniting, it gave us ſtrong reaſon to hope for the reunion of the ſymphyſes of the *os pubis*. Certain obſervations had even proved it, but others left room for doubt. We had examples of women who felt much uneaſineſs from the motion perceived in the ſymphyſes of the *pubes*, ſo as not to be able to walk. Other obſervations related to me by people of veracity, proved that this was ſometimes obviated by means of a bandage. It now ſtruck me that want of proper reſt might be the cauſe of the parts not reuniting, and that it was occaſioned by the patients getting up too ſoon, for the callus loſes its agglutinating power in proportion to the motion of the parts. Wherefore in the reunion of fractures, if ſuch motion happens, no fixed union ſucceeds, but the bones form a kind of articulation.

I mentioned all theſe ideas on the ſeparation and reunion of the parts in my public and private lectures, and wiſhed to ſee them confirmed by experience on living ſubjects. In ſhort, I publiſhed a firſt part on the practice of midwifry, and ſhall ſoon publiſh more.

When treating on thoſe caſes of diſproportion between the head and *pelvis*, where the *Cæſarian* operation had been recommended, I hinted at other methods, and expreſſed myſelf thus: * "To render the *Cæſarian* operation leſs frequent, and leſs fatal, to determine thoſe caſes in which it is pointed out, and reduce them to the ſmalleſt number poſſible, to ſubſtitute in its room a leſs dangerous operation, and laſtly, to baniſh totally from the courſe of practice this formidable and generally fatal reſource."

I had the pleaſure to ſee that many of my pupils

* See the *Practice of Midwifry*, firſt Part, containing a Critical Hiſtory of the Doctrine and Practice of the moſt eminent Accoucheurs, page 202.

pupils underſtood my doctrine, and defended my principles in their public Theſes; particularly Mr. *Chandon*, who had proved his great abilities in the Marine Hoſpitals; and in order ſtill to make himſelf more uſeful to the public, petitioned Monſ. *Sartine*, for leave of abſence to attend my lectures in *Paris*.

Having ſpent a proper time in *Paris*, he went to *Montpelier*, in order to take his degrees. He dedicated his Theſis to Mr. *Sartine*, Miniſter to the Marine Department, and therein defended my favourite propoſition, *viz.* that in labour a woman never ſhould loſe her life when under the care of an able operator.

After deſcribing ſuch caſes as are formidable, he ſhews the remedy, and relates many inſtances of caſes uſually proving fatal, wherein he has ſeen my practice attended with ſucceſs. Mr. *Chandon* had the very uncommon delicacy not to appropriate to himſelf one of my ideas. After propoſing various

various means to ſupply the uſe of the *Cæſarian* operation, and among others, the ſection of the *pubes*, he ſays, "By this operation none of the viſcera eſſential to life are endangered; it has been rejected merely from timidity, and without any good reaſon, eſpecially ſince Mr. *Alphonſe Le Roi* has obtained ſo much ſeparation as two inches and a half in the *os pubis*." And here Mr. *Chaudon* relates the obſervation mentioned above. A ſurgeon, very well verſed in the art of midwifry, and unacquainted with my works, in the year 1776, publiſhed and defended a Theſis in the public ſchools, in which he condemned the ſection of the ſymphyſes, in caſes where the *pelvis* is too narrow to let the child's head paſs. Mr. *Bodeloc* does not diſapprove the opinion of the ancients as to the ſwelling and ſoftneſs of the parts, but he ſays, very juſtly, that we ſeldom obſerve any ſenſible mobility towards the ſymphyſes; nevertheleſs, he mentions one *pelvis* which he had ſeen, where

where the ſeparation in the *pubes* amounted to fourteen lines. He diſapproves the operation of the ſection of the *pubes*, on account of the inſufficiency of a ſeparation of one inch, mentioned by Mr. *Sigault*, in a Theſis at *Angiers* in 1772.

In order to obtain that ſeparation, the author was obliged to thruſt a wedge into the opening of the *pubes*, becauſe he did not try his experiments on the *pelvis* of women who died in labour, or ſoon after delivery. He obſerved, that in caſe of a ſeparation of one inch, the *pubes* does not diverge forwards above two lines; conſequently, if there be a diſproportion as to the tranſverſe diameter of the head with the *pelvis*, of more than two lines, the operation is not adviſeable. This reaſoning amounts to a demonſtration. He adviſes then, in caſes where one would wiſh to practiſe it, rather to uſe the forceps; but it were to be wiſhed that he had taken pains to determine exactly the caſes wherein this inſtrument can

reduce

reduce the diſproportion; and that he had ſhewn clearly in what degree he could diminiſh the ſize of the head, ſo as to overcome this difficulty.

When this ſurgeon heard I had obtained two inches and a half in the ſeparation, he had a favourable opportunity of repeating my experiments, and having the ſame ſucceſs, informed me of it, teſtifying how greatly he was intereſted in it. It is a characteriſtic of real merit to ſeek truth, merely for its own ſake.

I heard of Mr. *Sigault*'s Theſis, but as I had not ſeen it, in the month of *July* 1777. I went to his houſe, and begged of him to let me have a peruſal of it, in order to aſcertain the difference between his reſearches and mine, and to make them concur in giving ſome weight to a project which was inconſiderately rejected. My friend readily granted my requeſt: he gave me his Theſis only, the memorial which he preſented to the Surgeons Company not being at hand.

Impatient

Impatient to ſee the contents of this Theſis, I peruſed it, and will here give ſome extract of it.

By the title of this Theſis it implies, that in preternatural labours, the ſection of the ſymphyſes of the *pubes* is a much readier and ſafer operation than the *Cæſarian*. It conſiſts of five paragraphs, the firſt contains only ſome general propoſitions foreign to the ſubject; in the ſecond he ſays, "The force of the *uterus* ſometimes acts upon itſelf; hence ariſes in ſome labours a rupture of this viſcus itſelf, in which caſe we have been obliged to make an inciſion into the belly of the mother, to extract the child contained in the abdomen. By this operation *Julius* was born; and hence they gave him the ſurname of *Cæſar*; and from this incident the operation was called *Cæſarian*."

"The dangers of this operation are hæmorrhage, a diffuſion of purulent matter into the cavity of the abdomen, a hernia

with

with ſtrangulation of the inteſtines, mortification, convulſions, and death."

In the third paragraph he ſays, "The cartilages become relaxed towards the latter end of pregnancy, and during labour the bones recede from each other by little and little, and ſometimes quite ſeparate." He maintains this aſſertion upon the authority of ſome celebrated anatomiſts. In the 4th part he goes on thus: "*Fernelius* mentions the ſtrong junction of the *pubes* as one of the chief obſtacles to delivery. *Pineau* in thoſe caſes recommended relaxing applications and liniments; but they prove very ineffectual. Take a biſtory with a blunt point, cut and divide the integuments above the *pubes*, go through the pyramidal muſcles from top to bottom; the ſymphyſes of the *pubes* being now expoſed, convey your fingers to the cellular membrane behind the *pubes*, and cut boldly this intermediate cartilage: Immediately the *pubes* will ſeparate

above

above an inch, and the fœtus, by the force of nature, will come ſafely into the world. When the power which tends to ſeparate the extremities of the *pelvis* no longer exiſts, the *pubes* will reunite. This may be done more effectually by the application of a bandage. The wound being of a ſimple nature, a cure will be completed by reſt, without any dangerous ſymptoms. This operation is preferable to the forceps, as that inſtrument may injure the head of the child, and produce inflammation or gangrene. Mr. *Camper* performed this operation on a *ſow* with ſucceſs."

In the fifth part Mr. *Sigault* anſwers the objections made to his doctrine, and ſays, "It will be objected, that when the ſymphyſes is oſſified, this operation cannot be performed; but this is a caſe which ſeldom happens. The danger of wounding the neck of the bladder may alſo be an objection; but this organ is joined to the ſymphyſes only by a looſe cellular membrane, which may be di-

vided with the finger, if the fœtus has not deſcended below the brim of the *pelvis*; and if it has, wounding the neck of the bladder is not an incurable caſe, as the ancients ſuppoſed. Others advance, that the *pelvis* cannot be ſufficiently enlarged by the ſection of the ſymphyſes. But let us conſider, that it is compoſed of different pieces, and that the extent of the aperture is an additional increaſe to the whole circumference of it. Others ſay, that the reunion cannot be brought about; but the contrary is proved by the experiments of Mr. *Camper*. And why ſhould not the cartilages reunite? It is true, Mr. *Verdier* ſays, he has ſeen two women who became lame upon a ſimilar ſtate of the *pubes*; but doubtleſs this proceeded from ſome venereal infection, or a ſcorbutic or ſcrophulous humour. According to the obſervations of Mr. *Petit*, *Louis*, *and De Laſaye*, this reunion has been effected. Mr. *Morand de la Rouſiere* ſaw a young man whoſe *pubes* had been ſeparated while he was fencing; whence I conclude, &c."

Upon

Upon a perusal of this Thesis, I told Mr. *Sigault*, who asked my opinion of it, that excepting some few assertions contrary to the theory of midwifry, it was a very good one; but that nevertheless, his propositions ought to have engaged more attention, and that one ought to have had recourse to trials relative to this subject. Upon that he mentioned the opposition and disagreeable circumstances he had met with concerning it.

Mr. *Sigault* told me, that Mr. *Camper* had petitioned government in *Holland*, to give him up a female convict, in order to try the operation on her; but that the learned *Gaubius*, whose opinion had been taken on the occasion, determined government to refuse his request.

The following were my reflections on this occasion:

"Men always fear innovations where they are most interested. Hence it is that useful discoveries meet with considerable oppositions, while trifling ones are received with

avidity. I am not ſurpriſed, Sir, at the oppoſition you have met with; upon a ſubject ſo intereſting, you can convince only by reaſoning joined to demonſtration. Had you aſſerted a more conſiderable ſeparation, had you declared that through the worſt formed *pelvis* you could convey a head of the largeſt ſize, had you explained the nature of it, you would have met with three kinds of people; ſome, who will not yield to the moſt convincing arguments, being influenced by paſſion; others, more indifferent, would have their doubts, becauſe they would not take the trouble to examine the matter; and a third party would have underſtood you, and have become your moſt zealous partizans; but they would ſay, that experience and reaſoning were againſt you, for it has been demonſtrated, that the ſeparation of an inch, as you aſſert, is not enough, and you have not proved the contrary. You ſuppoſe that this inch acts upon the whole

whole *pelvis*, and increaſes its dimenſions ſo as to let the head paſs, and you extend this principle to every kind of diſproportion. As to Mr. *Camper*, I would not have granted his requeſt any more than the government in *Holland* did. I would have objected to him thus: If you ſucceed, Sir, you will lead us into an error, becauſe the ſucceſs you meet with upon a well formed *pelvis*, will not prove the practibility of ſucceeding upon an ill formed one. You will prove the reunion of the parts. Your experiments on the ſow proves it ſufficiently; therefore when I adviſed my pupils to beg a convict in their provinces, repreſent, ſaid I, to the Judges, that the reunion is almoſt certain; but inform them that it is of the higheſt importance to aſcertain whether a ſeparation of *two inches and a half* may be obtained, by which means, even through an ill-formed *pelvis*, a very large head may be conveyed. Furthermore ad-

vance, that all perſons of ſenſe and experience agree as to the ſafety of the operation; but that it is neceſſary to be aſſured whether the ſeparation, in caſe of an ill-formed *pelvis*, may not be attended with ſome unforeſeen accidents."

On the 27th of *September*, 1777, about two months after this conference, when we were at a meeting of the faculty, Mr. *Sigault* took me aſide, and told me "that he was ſhortly to deliver the wife of Mr. *Souchot*, whoſe labours had always been very bad, on account of her deformity, and ſhort ſtature, which was only three feet eight inches high.

"At her firſt labour, in the year 1769, I could not poſſibly myſelf ſucceed in extracting the head, but begged the aſſiſtance of Mr. *Piet*; and after trying alternately to the utmoſt of our power, the head came lengthened through the *pelvis* to an aſtoniſhing degree.

"In *May* 1771, I was ſent for to deliver her

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a ſecond time. I called in ſucceſſively Meſſrs. *Thevenot* and *Coutouli*, two gentlemen of experience and ſkill. We were obliged to extract the head with the crotchet. She was delivered by the ſame means in a third labour, though the head of the child was much ſmaller, being only in the eighth month of pregnancy. Since that time ſhe has been afflicted with a *prolapſus vaginæ*.

" On Eaſter-day, 1775, I was called in a fourth time, and got a number of Accoucheurs and celebrated phyſicians to attend with me. About Six o'clock we ſeverally began to uſe our utmoſt power to relieve her, but could not for two hours, when at length we extracted the head by the ſame manœuvre as before. It was then unanimouſly agreed, that this woman could never be delivered of a living child, except by the *Cæſarian* operation. I then propoſed a *ſection of the pubes*, which was re-

jected. Do you think, says Mr. *Sigault*, it may succeed? if you think it may, will you favour me with your assistance and advice? which I readily assented to, but not without some caution."

PART

PART II.

HOWEVER certain the ſucceſs of the ſection of the ſymphyſes of the *pubes* appeared to me, my hopes were attended with ſome fears, but reaſoning quickly removed them, and feelings which warmed my heart, made me enjoy, by anticipation, the grateful acknowledgments of thoſe whoſe exiſtence I was likely to preſerve by this means.

I was impatient to communicate my thoughts to Mr. *Sigault*, as we were equally engaged in the ſame laudable undertaking. In the mean time, that no reproaches might be made on me, or rather that I might have nothing to reproach myſelf with, I conſulted ſome wiſe and experienced friends, rather with regard to the propriety of my conduct,

conduct, than the nature of the operation. At length, on the 30th of *September*, Mrs. *Souchot* was taken in labour, and ſent about Five o'clock in the evening for Mr. *Sigault*, who came about Seven, and returned at Ten. About One o'clock in the morning he called me up, and informed me that the child preſented by the feet, and that the mother was willing to ſubmit to the operation. I encouraged him in the undertaking, and we haſtened to our patient with the pleaſing hope of relieving her. When we arrived at Mrs. *Souchot*'s, I made my remarks on her deformity, and was much encouraged by her ſeeming reſolution. As her pains were neither ſtrong nor quick, I aſked ſeveral queſtions, in order to diſcover the bad formation of her body, and ſhe gave this hiſtory of herſelf, *viz.* "She was thirty-eight years of age, born of healthy parents; her father, a muſic-maſter, was ſixty-four years old; her mother thirty-eight when ſhe was born. It was her misfortune to be

placed

placed under the care of a bad nurſe, where ſhe had the ſmall-pox at eight months; at the twentieth month her dentition was attended with violent purging and convulſions; her limbs became diſtorted, ſo that ſhe could not walk till ſhe was eight years old, nor even then without crutches, which ſhe was obliged to uſe until the period of her menſes. She was married in her twenty-ninth year, and had had four painful labours. Mr. *Sigault*, Sir, (added ſhe) has always attended me, but I now commit myſelf to your united care."

I declared to her how deeply I felt for her ſituation, and next endeavoured to procure a juſt knowledge of the poſition of the fœtus, and the dimenſions of the *pelvis*. I obſerved that the child preſented by its feet, that the orifice of the *uterus* was very much dilated, and that the diameter, from the anterior to the poſterior part of the *pelvis*, did not exceed two inches and a half. I told

told Mr. *Sigault*, that as the diameter of a child's head at its birth is uſually at leaſt three inches and a quarter, it would be impoſſible for it to be delivered at an aperture of only two inches and a half; that conſequently ſhe muſt ſubmit to the *Cæſarean* operation, or that which we intended to ſubſtitute for it, to which laſt ſhe conſented.

Every thing being got ready, we folded the mattraſs three times, and placed her on it. We began by feeling for the middle part of the cartilage of the ſymphyſes, which we readily diſcovered by the finger. I adviſed Mr. *Sigault* to begin the ſection of the ſuperior part of the ſymphyſes, but not above the pyramidal muſcles, and to do it by two inciſions. Firſt, to divide the integuments as far as the middle of the *pubes*, while I held the lower part downwards, and then to begin the ſection of the cartilage. Secondly, to finiſh the inciſion of the integuments, without any fear of

hæmorrhage

hæmorrhage obſtructing him in the ſection of the cartilage. Mr. *Sigault* had nothing but a common biſtory to perform this operation with. The thighs being opened and raiſed, he performed it in the manner mentioned. The moment the ſeparation was completed, the *pubes* parted, as if the ſtring of a bow had been divided, and receded to each ſide under the integuments. I immediately began to extract the child after Mr. *Sigault* had broke the membrane, and brought the feet as far as the os externum. I firſt made myſelf ſure of the extent of the ſeparation which we had gained by the ſection, in order to judge of a proper method to extract the head. I laid my four knuckles in the ſpace procured by the ſection, which meaſured *two inches and a half*, an extent ſomewhat more than that which I had gained upon the body of Mrs. *Braſſeur*, which gave me pleaſure. The child's heels were turned to

the

the right ſide, and I extracted the body by gentle efforts, which I directed towards the lateral parts entirely, and not to the ſpine. I diſengaged the left arm, and then the right, the head being ſtill above the brim of the *pelvis*, I applied my hand to the face, which correſponded with the ſymphyſes of the left ilium; I opened her thighs as far as I could, and fixed the largeſt portion of the right parietal in the ſeparation. The integuments projected; I made the left parietal anſwer to the right lateral ſide of the hollow of the ſacrum; afterwards, upon raiſing the body of the child, I drew out the left lateral ſide of the head, while at the ſame time, with the right hand applied to the naſal foſſa, I brought the chin downwards. By theſe united efforts I overcame the greateſt reſiſtance at the brim of the *pelvis*. When it had now gained the hollow of the ſacrum, I brought the occiput between the ſeparation, and diſengaged the chin at the inferior part of the os externum,

num, by raiſing the child's body; the reſt of the body followed preſently, and the patient was delivered, to her great joy, of a living ſon. The thighs being lowered, the ſeparation appeared not to exceed eight lines. I immediately extracted the placenta, becauſe the *uterus* began to contract itſelf exceedingly.

During this operation, which was neither very painful nor tedious, the woman loſt very little blood, and the huſband being called in, could ſcarce give credit to ſo fortunate and ſpeedy a delivery. We applied ſome lint to the wound, and removed the patient on the mattraſs, in order to make her bed. Upon the leaſt opening of her thighs ſhe felt very acute pains in the left poſterior ſide of the loins and *pelvis*. We applied a napkin, by way of bandage, to keep the *pelvis* in a juſt poſition, to which we faſtened two ribbands behind, one on the right, the other on the left, and brought them under the thighs, in order to tie them before.

before. When put to bed, we found her pulſe was not affected, and enraptured at becoming a mother, ſhe requeſted us to give her the child, in order to ſuckle it.

We ſtaid with her above two hours, and finding no appearance of danger, we parted, promiſing to meet again at Twelve o'clock.

Thus ended an operation heretofore unattempted, and at all times condemned and oppoſed. The care and management of the wound next became the object of our attention, which I conſidered of a very important nature, as I might meet with unforeſeen difficulties, a detail of which ſhall make the concluſion of this part of my narrative.

At the appointed hour we took off part of the dreſſing; finding, with pleaſure, that there had been no hæmorrhage, as the bed appeared very wet, I aſked her if ſhe had felt any diſcharge of urine, or if it had paſſed involuntarily? She replied, that ſhe had made water twice voluntarily,

but

but in ſmall quantities. We agreed to make a report to the medical faculty of what had paſſed, to requeſt they would intereſt themſelves in this operation, by ſending commiſſioners to aſcertain the fact, and attend to the treatment of the caſe. It was their monthly meeting that evening, and being arrived before Mr. *Sigault*, I made this operation the ſubject of my diſcourſe among the members, explaining to them the particulars of our proceedings. The faculty, at my requeſt, appointed Meſſrs. *Grandelas* and *Deſcemet*, two of their members, and gentlemen much reſpected for their ſkill and experience. Mr. *Sigault* now arrived, and read a paper to the aſſembly, exactly to the ſame purport as what I had mentioned.

We afterwards went to ſee our patient, and found ſhe had no fever, but only ſome pains in the left ſacro iliac region, and contiguous parts. She requeſted us to

ſlacken the bandage a little, which we did.

The next morning, being the third day from her delivery, the commiſſioners paid Mrs. *Souchot* a ſecond viſit, when ſhe had no fever, although ſhe had been diſturbed all night by the child. Mr. *Sigault* being indiſpoſed, the treatment of the caſe was left to me. I took off the dreſſing, which gave the commiſſioners an opportunity of ſeeing the reality of the ſection. The *ſeparation* now appearing to be about ſix lines, I obſerved to them, that by taking off the bandage it became larger, and ſtill more ſo upon opening the thighs, and that the patient then felt very acute pains in the loins, in the left ſacro iliac region, and in the cotyloid cavity of the ſame ſide. The bed was quite wet with urine, which ſhe had voided only once, and that in a ſmall quantity. She was removed to another bed, in order to be dry, which gave her great pain. As this

was

was the caſe from the ſlighteſt motion, ſeveral applications were propoſed, and we fixed upon the following, *viz.* the white of an egg beat up with brandy. I feared leſt ſome of the lymphatic veſſels had been injured, and conſidering the parts upon which we had operated were ſomewhat of the ſame nature with the joints, I deemed this application a very proper one. A ſtrict diet was ordered. Towards night the patient complained of great pain near the nipples, but ſhe had no fever.

On the fourth day we were indiſcreet enough to ſay in her hearing, that the reunion took place in the animal under the care of Mr. *Camper*, without the help of a bandage. She therefore deſired to have her's taken off. She would hearken to no reaſon, and in ſpite of us we were obliged to remove it. As ſhe ſeldom gave the child the breaſt, and could not ſuckle with the left, but with greater pain than the

right, we uſed a glaſs pipe to draw off the milk. She had a ſlight degree of fever this evening.

On the fifth morning ſhe had a little fever, which might be the more on account of her uneaſy and diſagreeable ſituation in bed, being unable to be moved, much reſtrained in diet, and alſo particularly deſired to lay on her ſide.

On the ſixth ſhe had yet no ſtool. I now thought it proper to procure one, and ordered a clyſter, which did not bring away any fœces. The union became now very viſible in the ſymphyſes; the wound was very ſmall, owing to the approximation of the integuments. It was propoſed to change the dreſſings, and apply a ſmall pledget of the balſam of arcæus. She now felt but little pain, the diſcharge was ſmall, and every thing promiſed a ſpeedy cure; but after our departure, ſhe eat ſomething, and in too great a quantity;

tity; for Mr. *Deſeſſartz*, dean of the faculty, who called to ſee her an hour after the dreſſing, found her ſhivering, and her pulſe altered, together with difficulty of breathing. At our evening viſit we found that all thoſe accidents had diſappeared. But a ſecond exceſs in the article of eating, joined to ſome domeſtic troubles, during that night, brought on bad ſymptoms again.

On the ſeventh many phyſicians and ſurgeons who viſited with us, were witneſſes of her having much fever, attended with languor. She had alſo at this time a conſiderable diſcharge of lochia, with acute pains, and the pledget of the balſ. arcæus was covered with a black diſcharge when taken off; wherefore we had recourſe to a defenſative compound of aromatic brandy, called red water, mixed with the white of an egg. By obſerving a ſtrict diet ſhe found herſelf better, and at night we were

informed ſhe had a copious ſtool, and made water twice in the afternoon.

On the eighth, conſidering the diſcharges, which this day had been profuſe, I aſked her if while ſhe ſuckled there was not viſibly a greater quantity? She replied in the affirmative; and to make myſelf ſure of it, I applied my hand to the os externum while ſhe ſuckled, and felt a conſiderable quantity come from her. We therefore adviſed the application of a bandage. During that day ſhe made water twice, and had two large bilious ſtools. Many of our aſſociates attended the dreſſing of the patient every day; among others Meſſieurs *L'Surier*, *Vicq*, and *Champſereu*. Mr. *Deſtremeauz*, ſon in law to Mr. *Levret*, came with them, and ſeemed to intereſt himſelf much in the ſucceſs of the operation. He adviſed us to take care that the patient committed no exceſs through the advice of

thoſe

thoſe about her; and told us, in preſence of Mr. *Vicq* and many others, that Mr. *Levret* had computed the diameter of her *pelvis*, from the anterior to the poſterior part, to be about two inches and a half.

I ſhewed Mr. *Pelletan*, in preſence of the commiſſioners, the pledget, covered with the ſuppuration produced by the wound. My intention was to prove that the diſcharge did not, as he had given out, proceed from a ſuppuration of the cellular membrane.

Mr. *Goubelly* aſſiſted this day at the dreſſing. He looked at the child, which did not thrive, on account of the irregularity with which he had been ſuckled. I perceived he was meaſuring the circumference of the child's head. In the evening I found the patient had paſſed the day very well; ſhe was aſleep when I arrived, and I would not ſuffer her to be waked.

On the tenth ſhe had ſymptoms of general weakneſs, and her ſpirits were low; the diſcharge had been, and continued very copious: She wept and told me, with much uneaſineſs, that ſhe ſaw many ſtrangers attend at the dreſſings; her pulſe, which was very irregular when I came in, became very quick, which convinced me that her ſpirits were hurried. I endeavoured to conſole her, and gave her ſome hopes of getting her diſtreſſes alleviated, which hopes were not fruſtrated. I diſcovered at night that ſhe had eat, during the day, a great deal of meat, and drank a few glaſſes of wine; hence her pulſe was feveriſh and quick, her ſkin dry, and ſhe had no diſcharge.

On the eleventh the wound had a good aſpect, but the evacuations had been ſo great, that they had penetrated through the bed, and were received into a baſon, which had been indiſcreetly emptied before we arrived. In order to obviate this inconvenience, the

bed

bed was covered with a great deal of tow, and orders were given to change frequently that which was near the wound. I went to Mr. *Deſeſſartz*, dean of our faculty, in order to acquaint him with my uneaſineſs upon this occaſion. I begged his advice and aſſiſtance in remedying this alarming caſe. He was quite of my opinion, that to ſtop this diſcharge, it was firſt neceſſary to determine its nature, which could not be done better than by analyſing it.

The child became very weak, from a want of proper treatment. Mr. *Sigault* ordered a panado inſtead of milk, which the mother could not ſupply it with in ſufficient quantity, or regularly.

On the twelfth I was ſorry to hear that Mr. *Sigault* could not attend, on account of a fit of illneſs. The whole weight of the cure fell upon me, and only contributed to redouble

redouble my zeal. The diſcharge and pains were now ſomewhat abated, and I thought the wound, which had a ſpongy aſpect, and, inſtead of joining, formed a hare lip, would do better with a few drops of the balſam of *red ſioraventi*, in order to ſtimulate the edges of it. I obſerved that the extremities of the divided *pubes* were ſwelled, that the left was more ſo, and projected beyond the right. Mr. *Deſault*, a celebrated profeſſor of anatomy, who happened to aſſiſt at the dreſſing to-day, told me he had performed a ſucceſſion of experiments relative to this operation; that after cutting the *pubes* of ſeveral dogs, he had only gained a very trifling ſeparation, but that the reunion of the parts was always effected, though with ſome difference, which depended on the manner of performing the ſection; ſo that if he had made his inciſion and wounded the bone on either ſide, a

ſhooting

ſhooting of callus was produced on that part; but when the inciſion touched the cartilage only, it united without ſhooting out; that he ſaw no diſcharge in his experimental operations, like that attending this of Mrs. *Souchot*. He informed me that the particulars of theſe caſes, which ſeemed to be of a very intereſting nature, had been treated of in a Theſis, which one of his pupils, a Dutchman, had maintained in a foreign univerſity.

I could wiſh here to teſtify to this ſkilful profeſſor, how much I was pleaſed with his readineſs to concur in ſo important an operation.

On the thirteenth the child had ſucked but ſeldom, nevertheleſs, the mother's breaſts were flacid, the milk appeared curdled, and the diſcharges were very great. It appeared to me, that the chief portion of the ſerous humour, tended towards the inferior parts

of

of the mother, whereupon I propoſed taking the child from her, and ordered her the bark, with laxatives. Several of the faculty who were preſent, were not of this opinion; they thought proper to adminiſter a clyſter of emollient herbs, which produced, during the courſe of the day, two very copious ſtools, full of yellow matter.

On the fourteenth ſhe had ſo much relief from theſe evacuations, that ſhe turned ſeveral times in her bed; the ſymphyſis was ſo ſenſibly cloſed, that I thought it really united. The patient removed herſelf from one bed to another, ſupporting herſelf on her elbows and heels.

From the fifteenth to the nineteenth the patient grew daily better, the diſcharge leſſened, her pains ſometimes quite left her, or were at leaſt very ſlight. We now no longer applied to the wound any thing but

dry

dry lint and ſticking plaſter. She now made great quantities of urine. I every day blamed her for irregularity in diet, and obſerved that her child was very ill, and in great danger, if it had not a wet nurſe immediately.

On the nineteenth her pains returned, with a great diſcharge. I again enjoined a ſtrict diet, and adviſed the application of a bottle of hot water to the ſacrum, which during that night was productive of great eaſe.

On the twentieth, all complaints being abated, I requeſted her ſtill to be careful in her diet, but at night, the diſcharge being ſuppreſſed, and the pulſe feveriſh, made me ſuſpect ſhe had not obeyed my orders. She repeatedly declared how hungry ſhe was, when I told her, that if in her preſent ſituation ſhe would be ſo raſh as to eat ſupper, it would be of dangerous conſequence to her; but I no ſooner left her than, in ſpite of my advice, ſhe eat two freſh eggs,

and

and drank a great deal of wine and water.

On the twenty-firſt the indigeſtion, occaſioned by her imprudence, was attended with ſuch bad effects, I thought ſhe would have died. She now had fever with pains, and a diſcharge ſo copious, that we were obliged to put a baſon under the bed to receive it. This was the firſt time I had the opportunity of collecting enough of this diſcharge to try experiments upon.

I applied to Mr. *Buquet*, our fellow member, a gentleman very well ſkilled in chemiſtry and phyſic, and extremely zealous for the improvement of theſe ſciences. Although he was ill, he took all poſſible pains to determine the nature of this diſcharge, and favoured me with the following analyſis of it.

This humour was ſomewhat putrified and coloured, becauſe it paſſed through the mattraſs, which for ſome days had been imbibed by it. It had a ſmell very unlike

that

that of urine. It could not be coagulated either by fire or ſpirits of wine, nor even by the mineral acids, which raiſed a quick efferveſcence with it. By means of vitriolic acid a ſlight urinary precipitate was obtained, and by evaporation a little browniſh ſediment almoſt diſſoluble in ſpt. vin. This dried ſediment had plainly the taſte of ſea ſalt, and the vitriolic acid, when poured on it, raiſed a quantity of vapour of ſpirit of ſalt. By theſe experiments it appeared, that this matter was nothing more than urine, with ſome degree of crudity.

On the twenty-ſecond the diſcharge continued very copious, the patient became weak, and ſeemed to have caught cold.

On the twenty-third the urine, which had been for two days paſt ſuppreſſed, no doubt from the copious diſcharges, returned, and the fever abated. For two days paſt the child, owing to the extreme weakneſs of the mother, had not had the breaſt, but was now

put

put to it again. I heard, with much uneaſineſs, that people attributed the dangerous ſituation of this poor woman to me; whereupon I publicly declared my opinion concerning the neceſſity of getting a wet nurſe for the child, and preſcribing purgatives, laxatives, clyſters, and the bark for the mother.

Strict diet, which the patient obſerved for two days, abated her complaint, and on the twenty-fourth ſhe had four bilious evacuations, procured by two clyſters.

On the twenty-fifth ſhe was ſo much better, that we had hopes of her ſoon getting well.

On the twenty-ſixth family troubles renewed the old complaints; ſhe ſeemed to have got a freſh cold, but I judged otherwiſe of it, and thought that ſhe was only in a ſtate of cacochymy from weakneſs. Her extremities were cold, and ſhe frequently had

had a difficulty of breathing, which terminated with a ſhivering fit. Her belly was ſoft, but ſwelled. Her drink was ptiſan, made with barley, raiſins, and dates. In the evening ſhe had fever; the diſcharges were ſtopped, and did not return till about Three o'clock in the morning, when the fever began to abate.

At this time, the 27th, being certain the *pubes* was united, I was deſirous to examine what ſtate the parts were in. I perceived that the inciſion had been made more on the left than right ſide of the ſymphyſes, and that the left crus of the clytoris, and the meatus urinarius had been divided. Upon preſſure ſhe made water freely, from which I imagined the extremity of the duct only had been cut, without any injury to the neck of the bladder.

On the twenty-eighth the diſcharges decreaſed, as well as her cough and pains. In

my way home I met two of my colleagues, Meſſrs. *Nolan* and *Montabour*, who were going to ſee her. When I returned with them, we were ſurpriſed to find her eating endive, although I had recommended abſtinence.

On the twenty-ninth I deſired ſhe might take eighteen grains of ſalt of bark,* at three doſes, and a clyſter, made with milk, and brown ſugar; in conſequence of which ſhe had ſeveral copious evacuations; her pains left her, and the diſcharges abated.

This treatment being repeatedly uſed, the patient's health was viſibly eſtabliſhed, but there was another difficulty to overcome, *viz.* to take the child from the mother.

On the thirty-fourth the milky abſceſs broke, and from that time the patient recovered her ſtrength and ſpirits.

The

* Salt of Bark is an opening Preparation of Bark.—Vide Lemery, page 627. Paris, 1756.

The thirty-fifth we gave her two ounces of manna in a decoction of fumitory, which made her vomit a great quantity of very yellow bile, and procured her four copious ſtools.

At length, on the thirty-ninth, our patient conſented to put the child to nurſe. It recovered, and ſhe got ſtrength daily, ſo much, that ſhe was impatient to get up, which we thought imprudent, till ſhe had a proper bandage made and applied. We accordingly had one made by Mr. *Trenel*, a ſurgeon, and very ſkilful in that art.

Mr. *Sigault* was ſtill confined at home by a very ſevere fit of illneſs. We agreed not to let our patient get up before he ſaw her, therefore waited till he could come, which was on the forty-ſixth day from the operation, when Mr. *Trenel* preſented us with a bandage, which perfectly anſwered our

intention. It embraced the ſacrum, and was brought round to be faſtened before. As ſoon as it was applied ſhe walked acroſs the room without feeling any pain or motion in the place of the operation. From that time ſhe continued to get up every day, and to gain ſtrength. Being impatient under every kind of reſtraint, ſhe pretended the bandage hurt her, in hopes we might give her leave to throw it off.

On the ſixtieth day from the operation, ſhe walked down ſtairs, in order to go into a coach to the College of Phyſicians, and return thanks for favours received from the greateſt part of that reſpectable body.

* "She aſcended the ſtairs, and entered the aſſembly-room, leaning on her huſband's arm; being left to herſelf, ſhe ſtood firmly for ſeveral minutes: The Dean ordering her to ſit down, aſked if ſhe enjoyed good

* Quotation from the Regiſter of the Faculty.

good health? if ſhe had a good appetite, and digeſted well? if ſhe ſlept well and undiſturbed? if ſhe felt any pain in the parts where the operation had been performed? if ſhe had, like other women, the power of retaining her urine, ſo as to make water at her own will? To each of theſe queſtions ſhe replied, with an audible voice, that ſhe had a very good appetite and digeſtion, and performed all her functions freely and regularly; that her ſleep was ſound, and that ſhe gradually gained ſtrength. She perceived that ſhe walked up and down ſtairs every day with greater eaſe; ſhe felt no pain or uneaſineſs in the parts operated upon; retained her urine while ſhe ſat down, unleſs it happened there was a great quantity to come away, and that it never came from her drop by drop, involuntarily or inſenſibly, excepting when ſhe walked or ſtood, and this involuntary diſ-

charge was leſs frequent every day. She felt a violent pain along her left thigh, but acknowledged ſhe had been afflicted with this pain from her firſt lying-in. She added, that ſhe had ſuckled her child during the firſt month, but that Meſſrs, *Sigault*, *Le Roye*, and the commiſſioners from the faculty, had ordered her to leave it off. The nurſe was preſent with the child, and ſhewed it to all the gentlemen. It was in good health."

Although this caſe was thus made public by the faculty, ſome opponents to the operation gave out, that ſhe was diſabled from walking, but ſhe daily confuted their aſperſions.

PART

PART III.

WHEN the ſection was performed on Mrs. *Souchot*, it became a ſubject of general conſideration, and met with very unfair oppoſition. To rational experiments, they compared others made under different circumſtances, which conſequently could not have the ſame reſult.

I made no other anſwer to their unjuſt contradictions, than that " the child lives." But ſome people, more reaſonable, aſked me, how there happened to be ſuch contrary effects? " Becauſe, ſaid I, in order to obtain a ſeparation of two inches and a half, 'tis neceſſary the ſubject ſhould be pregnant, and far advanced; there muſt be a natural heat, and the thighs muſt be opened and raiſed."

By

By and by a proper ſubject for the operation was met with, and they eagerly ſeized the opportunity. A young woman died in labour. Great numbers aſſembled on this occaſion in the Theatre of a profeſſor of midwifery. The ſection was performed within eight hours of her death, in the manner before deſcribed, and they gained a ſeparation *beyond* what I had advanced; but they conſidered this as an objection to the operation, becauſe, the *internal poſterior ligaments were lacerated by it.* However, it was allowed, that the ſeparation I mentioned could be gained.

Others then ſaid, that the operation was not neceſſary, for the child could have been brought into the world alive by the feet.

If her third child, in the eighth month, could not paſs the brim of the *pelvis* alive, how could they expect that her laſt, which came at its full time, ſhould paſs it without dying? But upon an examination of the reſpective dimenſions, I ſhall demonſtrate

ſtrate the impoſſibility of this child paſſing through the *pelvis*, unleſs the head was ſomewhat diminiſhed, or the diameter of the *pelvis* increaſed by this operation.

Mrs. *Souchot*'s *pelvis* does not exceed above two inches and a half, from the back to the fore part of the brim, which was demonſtrable by the finger in this manner. Having introduced the fore finger through the vagina, it touched the tuberoſity of the ſacrum. Now upon meaſuring the length of it, from the end which touched the ſacrum, to the part anſwering the ſymphyſes of the *pubes*, I found it meaſured two inches and a half. This was eaſily done then, becauſe the diſtended uterus kept up the vagina, which at another time would have been difficult, on account of her *prolapſus vaginæ*. The moment the child was born, I meaſured the tranſverſe diameter of its head from one parietal prominence to the other, and found it amounted to three inches and a half.

Why,

Why, ſaid they, ſhould we have recourſe to this operation, when by graſping the child's head with the forceps, it might have been lengthened, and its tranſverſe diameter reduced ſo as to make it clear the *pelvis*, and that without endangering the life of the mother or child? Here Mr. *Cotouli*'s ſucceſs with that inſtrument was highly commended.

If ſuch means were the only ones to deliver the woman with eaſe, and ſave the child, why was it not uſed in the four preceding labours? Why did the critic, who is ſo well ſkilled in this art, neglect ſuch ſalutary means, and give up a child which he could have ſaved? If the uſe of the forceps was ſo properly pointed out, why did not Mr. *Levret*, who is ſaid to have reſtored its uſe, and made it ſo general, uſe it in the fourth labour?

In two forceps caſes where I was called in conſultation, the one 1775, and the other

other on the 15th Jan. 1778, in which caſe, Mr. *Lheriter* was concerned, both mothers and children died under circumſtances much more favourable than in the caſe of Mrs. *Souchot*, conſequently no other means were left to preſerve them both but the Cæſarian operation, or the ſection of the *pubes*. By the firſt the mother moſt commonly loſes her life, and in the latter there is no reaſon for ſuch apprehenſions.

The manner in which the head makes its way into the world, by the advantage of two inches and a half ſeparation of the *pubes*, may be underſtood by the account of Mrs. *Souchot*'s delivery.

The diſproportion of the head to the *pelvis* is obviated by the ſection, not only by the ſeperation of the *pubes*, but by their diverging forwards.

When the diameter of the brim of the

pelvis

pelvis, from the ſacrum to the *pubes*, meaſures two inches and a half, which was the caſe with Mrs. *Souchot*, the ſection of the *pubes* is the only expedient to ſave the mother and child. When three inches, this operation is indicated, and the ſeparation ſhould be directed according to the ſize of the head.

Mr. *Pean*, accoucheur to the Queen of Naples, relates a caſe of the difficult kind which proved fatal to the mother. The Cæſarian operation was performed after her death. Mr. *Pean* got the *Pelvis*, which afterwards was given me by his ſon.

In the three caſes before mentioned, the mother could have been ſaved according to the practice of the ancients, which ſome moderns deem barbarity; but our operation would have ſaved both mother and child.

In

In cafes where the brim of the *pelvis* meaſures three inches and a half, I believe that if the head be very large, the ſection of the *pubes* will be neceſſary; but the forceps ſhould previouſly be tried, which in ſuch cafes may ſometimes reduce the diſproportion; if it cannot, the ſection ſhould be immediately performed; but the ſeparation of one inch in this caſe may be ſufficient.

From hence we may conclude, that from three inches and a quarter to two inches and a half, and even, I think, two inches, the ſection is indicated.

Finally, my opponents endeavoured to reject this operation, on account of the accidents conſequent to it. The ſeparation of two inches and a half, ſaid they, cauſes a laceration of the internal and poſterior ligaments of the *pelvis*, for the operation being performed on a dead body, two inches of the inferior part of the ligaments were

lacerated

lacerated by it. They therefore concluded that the operation ought to be rejected. If experiments were made upon the dead body twenty-four hours after death, ought we to conclude the result will be the ſame upon the living? Do we not ſee that diſlocations in the living body do not produce the laceration of the ligaments, but will cauſe them after death: we have inſtances of it in the diſlocation of the thigh and ſhoulder. They aſſerted that this laceration had produced a general ſuppuration in the cavity of the *pelvis*: I can maintain that there was no other ſuppuration than in conſequence of the diviſion of the integument, and that in a very ſmall quantity.

The method which I adviſed of keeping the thighs aſunder during the operation, is hurtful, and I now condemn it; becauſe it makes the *pubes* diverge too ſuddenly, and ſtrains the poſterior ligaments.

The

The ſeparation ſeemed to prevail moſt on the left ſide, and from experiments it ſeems to be ſo diſpoſed naturally; and indeed when I introduced my hand to the face on that ſide, I evidently increaſed the ſeparation. We may infer from hence, that the left ſacro-iliac might have been irritated and bruiſed, which would have increaſed her pain; beſides, from the coldneſs of the ſeaſon, and other unavoidable circumſtances, muſt naturally have contributed to make her worſe. We may add too, that the defluxion on thoſe parts was greater, on account of her general weakneſs.

Evacuations, whether produced by art or nature, relieved her: I therefore wiſhed to give her laxatives joined with tonic medicines.

Having examined the patient and aſked her many queſtions, one day, her ſiſter followed me out of the room and ſaid, "Sir, I am not ſurprized at theſe diſ-

charges

charges; my ſiſter, from her infancy, till ſhe came to the age of puberty, has been afflicted with incontinence of urine, which returned after the accidents at her third lying-in. I aſſure you, that in her fourth pregnancy, when ſhe removed to my houſe, ſhe always had very copious and involuntary diſcharges of urine, whenever ſhe was uneaſy in her mind; therefore I am not at all alarmed at her being ſo now." After the information, and further reflection, I thought it more natural to ſuppoſe it owing to a relaxation of the muſcles which contract the neck of the bladder, as I know the conſtrictor muſcles, which are called ſphincters, have not always the ſame power of acting. In this caſe various cauſes tended to produce the relaxation.

Having proved the utility of the ſection of the ſymphyſis of the *pubes*, and determined the caſes in which it becomes neceſſary

ceſſary, let us now point out the manner of performing it.

The inſtrument uſed on this occaſion, is a common diſſecting knife with a convex edge, a little blunt in the point leſt it ſhould injure the bladder, and rather thin, becauſe it cuts the better. The proper ſituation for performing this operation, is to place the woman on her back at a height convenient to the accoucheur; the thighs being ſomewhat opened and the *mons veneris* ſhaved, introduce a catheter into the bladder. The inferior part of the integument muſt be drawn down, and the inciſion begun about two or three lines above the *pubes*, and no higher.

This firſt inciſion muſt not be carried further than the middle of the ſymphyſes. Another method may be uſed, viz. Take the integuments between the fingers on each ſide the ſymphyſes, and make the inciſion in the middle. This way

would be eaſier for the ſurgeon, and leſs painful for the patient; but the tenſion of the integuments makes it difficult. From this firſt inciſion you will have but little hæmorrhage, and the cartilage will be expoſed to ſight, ſo that you may chuſe exactly where to proceed with the inciſion. By cutting in the middle of it, the ſuſpenſory ligament of the bladder will be divided, and in procuring the neceſſary ſeparation it will be lacerated, which may occaſion an incontinence of urine. There are caſes in which this complaint can be attributed to no other cauſe than the laceration or relaxation of the ligament of that viſcus; it will therefore be right to avoid cutting in the middle of the cartilage. There are ſeveral advantages from cutting on either ſide: part of the ſuſpenſory ligament of the bladder will be preſerved, and it is likely by ſo doing, that the bone on that ſide will be touched; the ſhooting out from it will

procure

procure a ſpeedy aglutination and re-union. In the caſe of Mrs. *Souchot*, the inciſion having touched the *pubes* on the left ſide, that bone is thicker, and has ſhot out over the other ſide.

Mr. *Deſſault* obſerved the ſame appearances in animals on which he had made his experiments. The left *pubes* appearing after the ſection to recede more than the right, there will be a greater opening on that ſide; beſides, the neck of the bladder being rather more inclined to the right, and the fundus being ſo always, all theſe reaſons ought to determine us rather to chuſe the left ſide.

The integuments being cut as far as the middle of the *pubes*, the ſuperior part of the cartilage will be expoſed, you muſt then begin the inciſion, and continue it as far as the ſymphyſes, taking care to direct the catheter to the ſide oppoſite that on which the operation is performed; then

finiſh the ſection of the integuments, and afterwards that of the cartilage. I have already pointed out the reaſon for performing the operation at twice. As you are in moſt danger of wounding the bladder in dividing the upper part of the cartilage, it is very important not to be obſtructed by any hæmorrhage. This method, on account of its facility and readineſs, together with its ſucceſs, ſeems hitherto to be the beſt.

The moment the ſymphyſis is divided, the *pubes* recedes, and this the more, according as the thighs are kept opened. If the ſeparation is very ſudden and conſiderable, as the poſterior articulations act in the nature of hinges, the interior ligaments which cover them will be diſtended too ſuddenly, which may be of bad conſequence; it is therefore adviſeable to keep the thighs moderately opened during the operation, and afterwards upon raiſing them, to widen them gradually, until you have

have obtained the ſeparation neceſſary to finiſh the delivery.

With regard to the delivery, if the child preſents by the head, is it to be left to the expulſive power of the uterus, or are the forceps to be uſed? or is the child to be turned and brought by the feet? Mr. *Sigault* adviſes to leave it to the expulſive power of the uterus: I hope the following reaſons will induce us to adopt a different practice. After the ſection there is an arterial hæmorrhage, but however trifling it may be, we ought not to diſregard it. If after the operation we leave delivery entirely to nature, it would probably occaſion pains in the poſterior articulations, irritate and inflame the ſurrounding parts. Hence we ought not to leave the expulſion of the child to nature. Are we to uſe the forceps? In as much as they may be ſuppoſed to diminiſh the ſize of the head, they appear to be of ſome uſe;

but their preſſure is often of fatal conſequences.

Why ſhould we then have recourſe to a method which endangers the child's life, when the ſection has been undertaken merely to preſerve it? The only way is to turn the child, an operation which I have performed with great ſucceſs. After which the thighs are to be lowered, and placed near one another. The integuments, which were greatly diſtended during pregnancy, now will ſubſide ſo as to cover the ſymphyſes. A bladder muſt be fitted to the end of the catheter, in order that the patient may not be obliged to ſtir when ſhe wants to make water, and alſo in caſe the bladder has been injured, that the wounded part may heal without any inconvenience from urine. As to the wound, nothing more is neceſſary than dry lint, moiſtened with brandy beat up with the white of an egg, and diſcutient embrocations upon the

poſterior

posterior articulations of the *pelvis*. A bandage must be applied, to keep the divided parts in contact; to which there must be two tapes fastened, to be conveyed between the legs and tied before. The mother ought to suckle for eight or nine days, in order to prevent bad consequences from the milk; laxatives with tonics may then be directed according to circumstances. Great care should be taken to keep the parts in a state of rest as much as possible, in order to favour a speedy re-union. We have all the reason imaginable to hope that by following the above rules, this operation would be attended with a more expeditious cure than in the case of Mrs. *Souchot*, and without the least alarming symptoms.

At an advanced age, they say, it is to be feared no softness will ever take place in the articulations of the *pelvis*. This objection will be removed, if they remember

what I have before ſaid of the ſolution of the earthly matter during pregnancy, let the age be what it may. I ſhall now add ſome reflections on the proceſs by which this afflux of fluids ſwells and ſoftens the articulation. To give ſome idea of it, the following experiments are offered:

Wedges of porous wood, when driven forcibly into clefts made on the circumference of a rock, ſwell to ſuch a degree, by means of the moiſture they imbibe, as to break off huge pieces of it, to the aſtoniſhment of every one. The animal œconomy offers daily examples of this ſwelling of the articulations. We are taller in the morning when we get up, than in the evening, becauſe the weight of the body all day compreſſes the cartilages lying between the vertebræ; and during the night thoſe parts, being free from preſſure, ſwell by the afflux of fluids.

But theſe examples do not give a juſt

idea

idea of what happens, during pregnancy, to the cartilages in the articulations of the *pelvis*, which are ſwelled from another cauſe, called the vegetative principle, whoſe ſurpriſing power is beyond conception. The polypus of the noſe, which is a ſoft and pulpy ſubſtance, by its gradual increaſe warps the bones of the palate. Who can calculate the power of a tender plant, which, to make its way out of the ground, will remove a weighty ſtone? Can we ſay by what means the fluids ſwell and expand the uterus after conception? It is then the principle of vegetation, and in the human ſyſtem, that of life itſelf which is the cauſe of ſuch admirable effects. The rigidity produced by age or conſtitution, can ſcarce ever be ſo great as to counteract its wonderful effect.

Another inſtance of the ſucceſs of this operation will, I hope, give conviction, and firmly eſtabliſh the great utility of this diſcovery.

Mr.

Mr. *Deſpres*, ſurgeon and accoucheur of *St. Paul de Leon*, in *Brittany*, was ſent for, in *February* laſt, to the aſſiſtance of *Anne Beron*, a ſoldier's wife, who had been above two days, under the care of a midwife, in the ſtrongeſt labour pains. Mr. *Deſpres* judged ſhe could not be delivered of a living child, without the *Cæſarian* operation, or the ſection of the ſymphyſis. Encouraged by the ſucceſs we had met with, which was publiſhed in all the journals, he performed the latter, and by that means, in a ſhort time, and without giving the mother much pain, he delivered her of a male child. Mr. *Deſpres* ſent an account of the caſe to the dean of our faculty, to be communicated by him at their firſt meeting, which was done on the firſt of *April* 1778.

The operation was performed and attended with all poſſible ſucceſs.

The remaining point to be diſcuſſed, is whether it may be often repeated upon the ſame ſubject. We muſt have a ſucceſſion

of

of obſervations and facts to prove this. My deſign is to make experiments upon animals, and if, after a variety of trials, I find I may juſtly recommend it, I ſhall think it my duty to publiſh my obſervations; for the preſent it ſeems to me, that from inferences made upon certain and well known facts, we may affirm, that there is no reaſon againſt a repetition of it.

The moſt probable are concretions in the poſterior articulations, which would prevent their mobility. I have endeavoured to find out the ſtate of theſe parts in Mrs. *Souchot*, ſince the operation, and could not remark any ſenſible alteration by it; for though the ſymphyſis of the *pubes* was thickened, there remained ſtill a line between the two bones, which would admit of an inciſion. There is reaſon to believe that the reunion of the parts is brought about by a ſubſtance of the nature of a ligament, rather than by a callus. This is proved by

the

the experiments made by Mr. *Deſault*. But even ſuppoſing a concretion, may it not grow ſoft in a ſecond pregnancy? Every circumſtance ſeems then to make us preſume, that upon a repetition of the ſection of the ſymphyſis, the ſame ſeparation may be obtained as in the firſt.

I ſhall here take the liberty of returning my thanks, in this public manner, to the Pariſian Faculty, of which I have the honour to be a member. This reſpectable body firſt encouraged me in the proſecution of my experiments. Their approbation alone was a ſufficient reward for the diſagreeable oppoſition I met with ſince the ſucceſs of this operation had been made public.

In this publication, my ideas are particularly preſented to the promoters of uſeful diſcoveries, and I ſhall be happy to acknowledge at any time the favour of their advice. Every objection made with an intent

tent to improve the art and bring it to perfection, will be very intereſting to me, and I ſhall think it my duty to reſolve it, if in my power. Oppoſition in ſentiment, by inveſtigating the ſubject, is often productive of truth: I am alſo ſenſible, with what weapons a generous opponent ought to engage; and I ſhall always reckon him an object unworthy of my attention, who has recourſe to any other arguments than thoſe of probity conducted by decency.

SINCE the concluſion of this TREATISE, Mr. *Cambon*, a very able ſurgeon at *Mons*, has ſent us an account of a caſe, in which he performed the ſection of the ſymphyſis of the *pubes* with good ſucceſs upon a deformed woman; a detail of which he intends to give the PUBLIC.

A Decree

A Decree granted by the Faculty of Phyſic at Paris, *with regard to the Caſe of Mrs.* Souchot, *under the Care of Mr.* Sigault *and Mr.* Alphonſe le Roy, *the* 6th *of December*, 1777.

THE members of this reſpectable body, whoſe utmoſt wiſhes and endeavours are exerted to promote ſcience, and who have always given the greateſt encouragement to ingenious men for uſeful eſſays or diſcoveries, have unanimouſly reſolved:

1ſt. That an accurate account of all that occurred at their two laſt meetings of the firſt of October, and third of December, with regard to Mrs. *Souchot*'s caſe, be printed in Latin and French. That the memoir read by Mr. *Sigault*, concerning the ſection of the ſpmphyſis of the *pubes*, performed on her by that gentleman,

gentleman, be alſo printed, together with the reports and opinions of the commiſſioners on this operation, reſpecting its conſequence and cure; and that theſe ſhall be ſpeedily printed and diſtributed, not only to the faculty themſelves, but to the medical world; particularly to be preſented, with ſubmiſſion, to our beneficent King, to the Princes, Miniſters, and Magiſtrates, in order that this new diſcovery of preſerving both mother and child, may be univerſally made known.

2d. That Meſſrs. *Sigault* and *Alphonſe Le Roy*, to whom the faculty and the public were already indebted, be intreated to uſe their utmoſt endeavours in the proſecution of their good undertaking, and to communicate and ſubmit their obſervations on this operation to the examination of the faculty, their views to perfect it, and their opinion of the ſtate of the mother and child, which

renders

renders it neceſſary. Alſo that all the learned be requeſted to communicate what they know, either from experiment or otherwiſe, concerning it.

3d. That they could not help admiring and applauding the ſpirit and fortitude of Mrs. *Souchot*; were very ſorry it was not in their power to allow her and her child a penſion, but that the dean of the faculty ſhould be directed to give her relief under her preſent indigence: Furthermore, they would humbly preſent a petition to their beneficent Sovereign, and ſolicit the public in general for her future relief, as a reward for her reſolution, in ſubmitting to an operation heretofore unknown, which may be the means to encourage others in her unhappy ſituation, to undergo the ſame, and thereby ſave their own lives, and thoſe of their infants.

4th. That

4th. That the obligation they were under to Mr. *Sigault*, who invented and performed this operation, was the greater, on account of the ſingular ſervice he has rendered ſociety, and alſo for the expence he has generouſly been at on this occaſion; that as it is not in their power to confer a reward on him adequate to his merit, it was their deſire he ſhould hold a diſtinguiſhed rank among them; and that the preſent and future age may know how worthy he is, they have ordered that his name ſhall be engraved on a medal as follows:

"In the year 1768, Mr. *Sigault*, D. M. P. invented and propoſed the ſection of the ſymphyſis of the *pubes*; and in the year 1777, performed it with ſucceſs."

They have ordered alſo that 3 hundred of theſe ſhould be preſented to him.

And Mr. *Sigault* having publicly teſtified that Mr. *Alphonſe Le Roy*, one of the mem-

bers of our college, by his exhortations and experiments, had encouraged him to undertake this operation, and assisted him in completing the delivery and curing the wound, the faculty agreed, that the inscription should conclude in these words:

"Mr. *Alphonse Le Roy*, D. M. P. assisted him," therefore they resolved that he should be presented with fifty of these medals.

Such was the conclusion of the decree.

S. C. DESESSARTZ,
Dean of the Faculty.

To which two gentlemen, seniors of each order, have signed their respective names.

Messrs. HAZON,
COCHU,
DU HAUME,
LEZURIER.

MVSEVM BRITAN NICVM

THE END.